

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) delivered remarks today at a press conference with Budget Committee Ranking Member Chris Van Hollen (MD-8) on Republicans denying their unanimous consent request to vote on the Senate bill to extend middle-class tax cuts, extend unemployment insurance, and fix the Medicare physician payment rate. Below is a transcript of Congressman Hoyer's remarks:

“Mr. Van Hollen and I just participated on the Floor of the House and sought to seek recognition so that we could ask unanimous consent to place on the Floor and pass legislation which would give certainty and assurance to seniors, to the unemployed, and to 160 million Americans who are at risk of losing their tax cut on January 1st. The ability to have that certainty, to have that confidence, not just at this holiday period but in January and in February while we take action to try to come to an agreement on the one year extension that we want.

“Unfortunately, as has happened so often, the acting Speaker, the Republican presiding officer, walked out. He walked out, would not render recognition and would not allow Mr. Van Hollen and I to make that unanimous consent request and move forward. This is unfortunate.

“The Speaker has indicated that he is ready to go to conference. The irony is that he appointed five conferees, all of whom at one point or another have said that they are opposed to a one-year extension of the middle-class tax cut. And in fact have made comments similar to the Speaker's that the middle-class tax cut is a gimmick. Well, the middle class doesn't believe that and working men and women in this country don't believe that. They don't believe that it's a gimmick to reject having the wealthiest people in America pay some additional, small increment so that this bill could pass in the Senate months ago. I regret that the Republicans can say that they are here to work, while we are on the Floor to do our work and they walked out.”

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